CIA 'Murder' Report

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Washington

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is investigating the possibility that the Central Intelligence Agency arranged for a hit-and-run murder in New Orleans in the late 1950's or early 1960's.

Senator Church (D-Idaho), who heads the panel, confirmed through a spokesman yesterday that he had [illegible] on this matter, but said that the results of the investigation will not be included in the committee's forthcoming report on CIA activities directed at foreign heads of state.

"We don't know as yet what weight to give it," Church said of the information obtained by the committee. "We have not made a full assessment of the evidence."

A spokesman for the CIA emphatically denied that a premeditated murder had ever been ordered or carried out by CIA officials within the United States.

The report under investigation would thus be the first known to have come to the attention of investigators suggesting that the CIA had ever considered the use of assassination in this country.

Church provided no details of the evidence obtained thus far by the committee's staff, but the principal exhibit is understood to be a written statement from a former Jesuit missionary that a CIA official once acknowledged to him having participated in such an assassination.

The former missionary, the Rev. Allen J. Stevenson, now a chaplain at the University of San Francisco, was unable in a recent interview to recall the name of the CIA man, who he said, solicited his opinion about the ethics of a killing carried out under orders from agency higher-ups.

But Stevenson provided a detailed description of the man, including his involvement in the conduct of intelligence-gathering flights over the Chinese mainland from a base in Hsinchu, Taiwan, where the conversation with the official took place.

Stevenson, whose mission was in Hsinchu, near the Taiwanese base, and others who had known the CIA official, subsequently recalled that he had been referred to as "Mr. Mac" and had an aluminum leg.

Intelligence sources said that the description fitted a CIA official they indentified as Robert McNamara, who had served with the agency in Washington and Las Vegas, Nev., as well as at Hsinchu.

The CIA spokesman dismissed reports of agency involvement in a domestic assassination as "just poppycock," but he did confirm that the CIA had employed a one-legged man named Robert McNamara, now dead, in this country and abroad.

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